

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: DOWNTOWN STATION STUDY

The Next Generation of Colorado Springs Transit



Downtown Station Study Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The *Downtown Station Study* is being conducted by Mountain Metropolitan Transit (MMT) to examine options for a new multimodal transit site in Colorado Springs. The goal of this effort is to create a community asset that improves transit operations, safety, accessibility, and rider experience while supporting downtown revitalization for the near and long term.

Where will the new station be located?

This study will identify a recommended location within the boundaries of I-25 to the West, Wahsatch Avenue to the East, Boulder Street to the North and Las Animas Street to the South.

What is a “multimodal” transit station?

A multimodal or intermodal transit station provides access for various modes of travel such as biking, walking, driving, or riding public transit. Similarly, a multimodal station helps travelers easily connect and transition from one mode of travel to another. This is especially important as more people are using multiple modes of travel to reach their final destination.

What is the study schedule? When will the new station be built?

This site location study has three basic phases that will occur in 2016:

- *Early-Summer*: Level 1 Screening provides a pass/fail determination of whether or not potential sites meet basic functional, land use and implementation requirements.
- *Mid-Summer*: Level 2 Screening produces a comparative ranking of the 5-10 sites which passed Level 1 Screening.
- *Late-Summer/Early-Fall*: Level 3 Screening undertakes detailed analysis of the final options before identifying a recommended site.

Once the recommended site for the new station is identified, MMT will quickly move forward with purchasing or leasing the property. The design and construction schedule will then be developed so that the process is timely, efficient and leverages federal funding opportunities.

How much will the new station cost? How much does this study cost?

A budget for the new station will be identified based on the site selected during this study. For cost effective implementation, this study is not considering locations that would require extensive site preparation/acquisition costs, significant underground facilities or elevated structures. The budget for the downtown station study is approximately \$200,000.

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How will the new station be funded? Why not use the money to improve service?

The majority of funding for the new station is expected to come through a grant from the Federal Transit Administration. This type of federal grant provides the opportunity to make a significant capital investment in our community with a small match (typically 20%) by our local government. Changes to transit service are not eligible for this type of federal capital investment grant. Therefore, in order to take advantage of federal funds, this study must be focused on developing a new station.

How does this study fit in with other future plans for Colorado Springs?

A top priority of this effort is to align with downtown redevelopment plans and leverage the long-term vision for the region. The study's evaluation criteria consider past and present planning efforts, as well as land use, zoning, policy and economic development potential.

What will happen to the existing station?

Until the new downtown transit station is built and operational, the existing station will continue to operate as it does today. MMT leases the existing station from the Colorado Springs Parking System Enterprise. Following the opening of the new downtown station, the current site will be transitioned back to the Parking System Enterprise for redevelopment.

Several past attempts to build a new transit station have failed. How is this study different?

There is an urgent need for a new transit station. The existing station is 40 years old, at capacity and has no room for expansion or Transit Oriented Development. Today, bus maneuvering is difficult and mixed vehicle and pedestrian traffic creates unsafe conditions. The current design also limits first responder access, multimodal connections, and results in a challenging boarding and unloading environment.

To ensure the success of this effort, MMT is using an approach that features the following differentiators:

- **Accelerated schedule:** Will work within the fast-paced Colorado Springs real estate market to move efficiently through property acquisition, design, and construction.
- **Visionary yet realistic:** Will develop an exciting vision for the next generation of Colorado Springs transit that fits within funding and implementation realities.
- **Flexible:** Will recommend a site, and potential backup sites, that provide flexibility for partnerships and/or future expansion to adapt to changing transit needs.
- **Robust community engagement:** Will provide opportunities for community input on potential sites at multiple key study milestones.

